

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 15 to 64 are pending. Claims 17 to 25, 29 to 44 and 49 to 64 have been cancelled. Claims 27 and 28 have been amended.

The Office Action stated: that the application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention; and that these species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The Office Action stated that the species are as follows:

Species I as shown in Figures 1 to 6 embodiments.

Species II as shown in Figures 7 to 12 embodiments.

Species III as shown in Figures 13 to 17 embodiments.

Species IV as shown in Figures 18 to 22 embodiments.

The Office Action stated: that applicants are required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable; that the reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added; and that an argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

The Office Action stated: that upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant's will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141; and that, if claims are added

after the election, applicants must indicate which are readable upon the elected species.

The Office Action stated that the claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed above in the following manner:

Claims 15, 16, 26 to 28 and 45 to 48 appear to correspond to Species I.

Claims 17, 18, 29 to 32 and 49 to 52 appear to correspond to Species II.

Claims 19 and 53 to 56 appear to correspond to Species III.

Claims 20 to 25, 33 to 44 and 57 to 64 appear to correspond to Species IV.

The Office Action stated that no claim appears to be generic.

The Office Action stated that a telephone call was made to applicants' attorney Mr. Virgil H. Marsh on February 24, 2004 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but it did not result in an election being made.

The Office Action stated that applicants are advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143). Applicants elect with traverse Species I, Claims 15, 16, 26 to 28 and 45 to 48.

Applicants reserve the right to file divisional and/or continuing applications for the non-elected species and claims.

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Date

Respectfully submitted,

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